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ABSTRACT

This seventh chapter in "The Challenge of Counseling in Middle Schools" presents four articles on career exploration during the middle school years. "'What Can School Do for Me?': A Guidance Play," by Natalie Wilson, presents a fantasy in which a middle school student and a superhero companion take a tour of the world of careers. The script of the play is included and follow-up activities are suggested. "Career Exploration for Middle School Youth: A University-School Cooperative," by Natalie Rubinton, describes the Career Exploration for Youth program, a program which served over 1,200 students, teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents. The four components of the program are outlined and the children's program, parent's program, and school personnel program are briefly described. "Teaching Job Search Skills to Eighth-Grade Students: A Preview of the World of Work," by Shelda Bachin Sandler, describes a method used to teach job search skills which combined lecture, discussion, question and answer, audio-visual aids, and handouts. The eight lessons of the method are briefly described and evaluation information is provided. "Career Education for Students with Disabilities," by Donn Brolin and Norman Gysbers, reviews some of the major developments in the past 10 years involved with improving the preparation of students with disabilities for life after school. It also describes the Life-Centered Career Education approach for these students. (NB)

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Chapter 7

The Challenge of Career Exploration in Early Adolescence

In search for identity, young adolescents struggle not only with the question of "Who am I?" but also with the question "Who will I become?" The latter question is often answered in terms of future occupation. Adolescents face an ever-changing world of work, a fact that is often neglected by overburdened middle school counselors. The economic, political, and social change that have brought women and minorities into the work force in large numbers have altered how youngsters must be prepared to enter the world of work. Chapter 7 discusses issues related to career development in early adolescence and offers suggestions to help middle school counselors promote students' career exploration. The chapter offers four articles that explore varying aspects of the world of work.

The first article, "What Can School Do for Me?': A Guidance Play," presents a creative approach to career education for middle schoolers. The author notes that the play is "an entertaining and effective way of helping students appreciate the relationship between their present work in school and their future work in the world of careers."

The second article, "Career Exploration for Middle School Youth: A University-School Cooperative," suggests the value of institutional cooperation in career education. This program involved students, parents, teachers, and university personnel in a broad-spectrum approach to career exploration. Through this project, students "developed

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self-knowledge, the ability to work together cooperatively on projects, and the skill of communicating more effectively" each of which is a key to career success.

The third article, "Teaching Job Search Skills to Eighth-Grade Students: A Preview of the World of Work," describes eight lessons to help youngsters develop needed skills for finding work. These skills included how to write a resume, how to fill out a job application, and how to interview effectively for a job.

The final article, "Career Education for Students with Disabilities," recommends innovative approaches for working with students who have special needs. The authors address the following important issue: Are we really going to "give all students, including those with disabilities, the opportunity to become competent and productive adults after they leave school?" This last article underscores the main point of Chapter 7, namely, that educators must break away from traditional practices so that comprehensive career education programs can become an integral part of middle schools.

"What Can School Do for Me": A Guidance Play

Natalie Susan Wilson

Assisting students in understanding the relevance of school to their future in the world of work can be a difficult task for counselors. Pupils frequently complain that much of their academic work is boring, while counselors find that simply encouraging students to do their assignments and reminding them of the value of an education are not enough to motivate them. The play, "What Can School Do for Me?," uses an entertaining format to help students recognize the importance of school to their own occupational goals. The play was developed as part of the activities celebrating National Career Guidance Week at King George Middle School in King George, Virginia.

First presented in the fall of 1981, "What Can School Do for Me?" is a fantasy in which a middle school student and a superhero companion take a tour of the world of careers. The cast consists of twelve characters, several of which can be played by a single actor. Since most of the parts are short, relatively few rehearsals are required. Costumes are minimal, and all props are readily available within the school or may be borrowed from the actors themselves. Moreover, a stage is not even necessary, merely an open area with a screen placed at one side for entrances and exits. The play lasts approximately fifteen minutes, including scene changes.

The Script of "What Can School Do for Me?"

Characters:

First painter
Second painter
First student
Second student
Teacher
First child
Second child
Wonderworker
Mechanic
Car
Medical laboratory technician
Football player

(Three chairs, two desks, and a small bench are at the back of the stage, and a music stand or easel is near the front on the right-hand side. Two actors wearing overalls and painters' caps enter. Each carries a paint bucket and a large rectangular posterboard sign. They pause in the center of the stage and put down the buckets and signs.)

FIRST PAINTER: We're sign painters. Our signs help people find what they're looking for.

SECOND PAINTER: We're here today to show you how what you learn in school can help guide you toward your goals in the world of careers.

FIRST PAINTER: Our play is called, "What Can School Do for Me?" *(They display a sign with the title on it.)* Actors in the play are... *(They flip the sign over to show the names of the actors, while the first painter names them, and then place the sign on the music stand.)*

SECOND PAINTER: We'll be introducing each act and scene for you like this.

SIGN PAINTERS *(in unison, displaying second sign that reads "ACT I")*: Act I! *(They flip the sign over to read "SCENE I.")* Scene I! *(They place the sign on the stand and bring up the desks and chairs from the back of the stage. They place one desk with two chairs on either side near the front, place the other desk and chair slightly farther back, and exit).*

Act I, Scene I

(Three actors enter, two dressed as students and one as a teacher. The students carry folders and pencils, and the teacher carries a large stack of dittos and a pen. The students sit facing each other at the front desk and work in their folders, while the teacher sits correcting papers at the back desk.)

FIRST PAINTER *(to the second student)*: Work, work, work! All we ever do in school is work! What do we have to do this stuff for, anyway?

SECOND PAINTER: A lot of my work doesn't make any sense to me, either. I want to be an automobile mechanic when I get out of school, and I'm not going to have to know any of this!

FIRST PAINTER: If I see one more ditto today, I'll scream.

TEACHER *(going over to students and placing the entire stack of dittos on the desk)*: Now, class, for tomorrow, do pages 1 through 20 of these worksheets.

FIRST PAINTER: Aagh! *(All exit.)*

SIGN PAINTERS *(displaying sign)*: Scene II! *(They place the sign on the stand, put all the furniture at the back of the stage except for one desk and chair, which they leave at the front, and exit.)*

Act I, Scene II

(The first student from Scene I enters, carrying a folder and a pencil. The student sits at the desk and begins working.)

FIRST STUDENT *(throwing down pencil and giving sigh of disgust)*: Work at school, work at home! I don't see the point of any of this homework! It's not going to help me get the kind of job I want. I'm never going to get all of these spelling definitions finished. *(The student wearily picks up the pencil and continues working. Two actors dressed as young children run in. One is in hot pursuit of the other, who clutches a comic book. Throughout their dialogue, they continue to run around the stage.)*

FIRST CHILD: Gimme my superheros comic book!

SECOND CHILD: I just want to look at it for a minute!

FIRST CHILD: You can't! It's mine! Give it here!

SECOND CHILD: Aw, come on!

FIRST CHILD: Give it back right now, or I'll tell!

FIRST STUDENT: I can't stand it! *(He or she yells toward offstage.)* Mom! Get these kids out of here so I can do my homework! *(The children run off.)* Maybe if I put my head down and take a break for a few minutes, I'll feel more like finishing my work, I'm so tired... *(The student yawns and goes to sleep. The sound of eerie music is heard offstage. Note: music may be supplied by an actor who can play an instrument such as the*

clarinet or by having all of the offstage actors say "Oo!" simultaneously. An actor dressed in a jogging suit and a flaring cape runs in and stands triumphantly in the center of the stage).

WONDERWORKER: Ta-Da!

FIRST STUDENT *(lifting head and wiping eyes)*: Hey, who are you?

WONDERWORKER: I'm Wonderworker! I'm here to take you on a flying tour of the wonderful world of work! We're going to look at workers in different careers and find out what school did for them.

FIRST STUDENT *(sarcastically)*: How did I get so lucky?

WONDERWORKER *(shrugging shoulders)*: Don't ask me, kid. I don't book the tours. I just guide them. Are you ready?

WONDERWORKER: I'm not really sure. I'm sort of new at this flying business. Hang on to my cape, and we'll take off.

FIRST STUDENT *(grabbing cape and shutting eyes)*: Don't go too fast. I'm afraid of heights.

WONDERWORKER *(adjusting cape)*: Don't bend the threads, kid. These outfits don't grow on trees, you know. Here we go! *(Wonderworker leads the student in a mad dash around the stage, with periodic leaps into the air.)* Up, up, and away! Up, up, and away! *(they pause, panting.)*

FIRST STUDENT: We don't seem to be getting anywhere.

WONDERWORKER *(clutching chest and breathing hard)*: Sometimes it takes a while to work up steam. *(They begin running again.)* Up, up, and away! Up, up, and away! *(They race offstage.)*

(The sign painters enter, carrying a sign that reads "ACT II.")

SIGN PAINTERS *(displaying sign)*: Act II! *(They reverse the sign to read "SCENE I,")* Scene I! *(They place the sign on the stand, put the desk and chair at the back of the stage, and exit.)*

Act II, Scene I

(An actor wearing a posterboard "sandwich" sign depicting the front and rear views of an automobile enters. The car walks around the stage and makes engine noises before stopping at the front. The car is followed by an actor dressed as an automobile mechanic in overalls and cap and carrying a car manual and a "creeper"—a flat board with wheels on which a mechanic reclines to perform work underneath a car. The mechanic lies down on the creeper and begins working on the car's "leg" with a wrench while consulting the manual.)

CAR *(as mechanic turns wrench)*: VROOM, VROOM! *(Wonderworker and first student race in.)*

FIRST STUDENT: Are you an automobile mechanic?

MECHANIC: No, smart guy! I'm a blacksmith, and this is my horse.

CAR *(as mechanic twists wrench on leg)*: Hey, watch the paint job?

WONDERWORKER: Could you please tell us what school did for you on the job?

MECHANIC (*getting up and wiping brow*): Well, just between you and me, I wasn't all that crazy about school when I was a kid. But I use the skills I learned every day on the job. I need to use math to make out the bills, order parts and keep track of costs. And if I couldn't read this manual, I couldn't fix the car.

FIRST STUDENT: And school helped with that?

MECHANIC: Sure! Besides, working in school with my teachers and the other students was a good way to practice getting along with people. I have to be able to talk to my boss and the people who bring in their cars to be repaired. When some customer gets all steamed up because a car isn't ready, I need to use all the listening and communication skills I learned in school.

WONDERWORKER: Thanks a lot. We're got to go now. Hang on, kid.

FIRST STUDENT *(grabbing cape)*: Not so fast this time, okay? I think I left my stomach somewhere over Cleveland.

WONDERWORKER: Up, up, and away! *(They race off, and others exit.)*

(The sign painters enter with a sign reading "Scene II.")

SIGN PAINTERS *(displaying sign)*: Scene II! *(They place the sign on the stand, bring up a desk and chair to the front, and exit.)*

Act II, Scene II

(An actor enters, dressed in a white laboratory coat and carrying a microscope, a lancet, a pad of paper, and a pen. The laboratory technician sits at the desk and makes notes while looking into the microscope. Wonderworker and the student race in.)

WONDERWORKER: Let's ask this medical laboratory technician how school was useful for this job. How did school help you with your career?

LAB TECHNICIAN: When I was in school, I was always more interested in science than any of my other subjects. Sometimes I had trouble seeing the importance of some of the work I had to do.

FIRST STUDENT: That's just how I feel! I'd much rather do math problems than spelling definitions!

LAB TECHNICIAN: But once I got this job, I found out that being part of being successful in a career is trying to do your best on all of your tasks. Sure, I like some of the things I do better than others. Filling out lab forms isn't as much fun as analyzing blood samples. But if I don't do it right, the doctor could make a wrong diagnosis.

FIRST STUDENT: I guess I never thought of it like that.

LAB TECHNICIAN *(to Wonderworker)*: Say, I bet your blood would be really interesting to look at! How about if I take a little sample? *(He or she holds up lancet.)*

WONDERWORKER *(recoiling)*: Uh, I don't think so. I'm not crazy about the sight of blood—especially when it's mine! We

have to be going now, anyway. Come on, kid. Let's go visit another worker. Up, up, and away! *(They run off, followed by the lab technician.)*

(The sign painters enter, carrying a sign reading "SCENE III.")

SIGN PAINTERS *(displaying sign)*: Scene III! *(They place the sign on the stand, return the desk, chair, and lab materials to the back, and bring up the bench. They exit).*

Act II, Scene III

(An actor enters, dressed in a football uniform and carrying a football helmet. A towel is slung over one shoulder. The football player sits down wearily on the bench and wipes off perspiration with the towel. Wonderworker and the student rush in).

FIRST STUDENT: Wow! A professional football player! I bet you didn't learn your career in school!

PLAYER: Where do you think I got started in football? I played varsity in high school and then went to college on a football scholarship.

FIRST STUDENT: But you don't need to know grammar or geography to be a football player, right?

PLAYER: Don't knock what you learn in school, kid. I won't be playing football forever, you know. The average player in the NFL only lasts for about four years. In a short occupation like this one, I have to be especially concerned about career planning. I'll be needing all the skills I learned in school to begin a whole new career in just a few years—or even earlier, if my passes keep getting intercepted like they are today!

WONDERWORKER: Don't forget, school can teach planning and organizational skills as well as academic skills. Planning long-term projects and keeping track of materials and assignments can get you ready to use these skills when they really count—in the world of work!

PLAYER: That's right! And learning to work with your teachers and fellow students can help prepare you to deal with a coach and teammates. That's really being on the ball!

WONDERWORKER: Thanks for talking to us, and good luck in the second half. Come on, kid. It's time to take you back. Up, up, and away! *(He or she prepares to take off.)*

FIRST STUDENT *(grabbing cape and stopping Wonderworker momentarily)*: Do you always have to say that?

WONDERWORKER: I need all the help I can get. Here we go! Up, Up, and away! *(They race off, followed by the football player.)*

(The sign painters enter with a sign reading "SCENE IV.")

SIGN PAINTERS *(displaying sign)*: Scene IV!! *(They place the sign on the stand, return the bench to the back, and set up a desk and chair at the front. They take a book, a folder, and a pencil out of the desk, lay them on top, and exit.)*

Act II, Scene IV

(Wonderworker and the student run in.)

WONDERWORKER: Well, what do you think about school now?

FIRST STUDENT: You know, Wonderworker, I guess school prepares you for having a job in all kinds of ways. Not only do the skills you learn help you get and keep a job, but learning to get along with teachers and classmates helps you work with others in your career.

WONDERWORKER: And remember, learning how to plan and be organized at school are also important skills you can develop and practice for later use on the job. Being a student is really a lot like being a worker.

FIRST STUDENT *(wryly)*: Except you don't get paid for going to school!

WONDERWORKER: That's true. And you don't get paid for going to school!

WONDERWORKER: That's true. And you don't get fired if you make a mistake!

FIRST STUDENT: I really appreciate the tour and advice, Wonderworker. *(He or she sits down at desk and picks up book.)* Say, before you go, what do you know about algebra?

WONDERWORKER *(edging away)*: Algebra? Uh, wouldn't you rather see me fly faster than a speeding bullet? Don't forget our trip. Up, up, and away! *(He or she races off.)*

FIRST STUDENT: Goodbye, Wonderworker! *(yawning)* Gosh, I'm tired after all that traveling. *(He or she puts head down and sleeps.)*

(The sign painters enter, carrying a sign that reads "ACT III.")

SIGN PAINTERS *(displaying sign)*: Act III! *(they flip the sign over to read "SCENE I.")* Scene I! *(They place the sign on the stand and exit.)*

Act III, Scene I

FIRST STUDENT *(lifting up head and stretching)*: Where are you, Wonderworker? Gone, I guess. What a trip! I'd better get going on this homework. *(The student begins working. The children rush in.)*

SECOND CHILD *(clutching a comic book)*: I told you I'd give it back when I finished reading it!

FIRST CHILD: You better give me that comic book right now! *(They continue to yell at each other and run around the stage.)*

FIRST STUDENT *(shaking head wearily)*: It seems like I've never been away. *(He or she yells toward offstage.)* Mom! Mom! *(He or she chases children around the stage and off.)*

(The sign painters enter, carrying a sign that reads "THE END.")

SIGN PAINTERS *(displaying sign)*: The end! *(They place the sign on the stand and exit.)*

Follow-up Activities

After the play was presented, a series of follow-up activities were conducted in the group guidance classes, which are a regular part of the sixth grade schedule at King George Middle School. Students discussed their reactions to the play and were assisted in relating their academic work to tentative career goals. The relevance of various school subjects to the job-seeking process was reviewed, such as the use of reading, grammar, and communication skills in completing job applications and participating in interviews.

To encourage individual career exploration, sessions were also conducted to orient students to the occupational resources in the guidance office, including an introduction to the *Guidance Information System* computer program, which contains information on a wide variety of educational and career alternatives. Several teachers invited the counselor to meet with their classes in additional sessions to assist pupils in using the *Guidance Information System* to explore careers of their choice. Finally, all sixth grade sections participated in a series of classroom plays focusing on attitudes toward school and work. Students formed groups, selected from a number of open-ended situations, and worked for several weeks writing, rehearsing, and performing the plays.

"What Can School Do for Me?" has been enthusiastically received by middle school students and teachers. Reactions have been so favorable that the play is being made a permanent part of *National Career Guidance Week* activities and will be presented to the new sixth grade class each fall. The addition of an evening performance is also being considered so that parents and members of the community may attend. "What Can School Do for Me?" has been an entertaining and effective way of helping students appreciate the relationship between their present work in school and their future work in the world of careers.

Career Exploration for Middle School Youth: A University-School Cooperative

Natalie Rubinton

Career guidance for children in middle and junior high schools should be a joint effort of the schools, the community, and the family. Such a comprehensive approach to career education formed the basis for the federally funded project, *Career Exploration for Youth* (CEY). Developed and implemented by career educators for Kingsborough Community College of the City University of New York and Community School District #22, both in Brooklyn, New York, this project served more than 1,200 participants, including children in both public and parochial middle and junior high schools and their teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents. From the inception of the program in November 1981 to its conclusion in July 1982, a high level of participation was maintained, serving an average of 550 people each week.

The program contained four components, which were financially supported by the federal grant and thus were offered free to all participants. The program was developed with the clear understanding that the middle and junior high school years (approximately ages 9 through 13) are crucial years for students to be involved in career education. Super (1957) described this age period as one in which students learn about their likes, dislikes, values, and abilities and how these attributes are related to careers. This learning needs to take place experientially. Thus, a series of "hands-on" career courses were presented to the students as the first of four program components.

Facilitating career maturity in this age group requires the significant input of parents familiar with career development and the world of work (Evans, Hoyt, & Mangum, 1973). Thus, a career decision-making course for parents was included as the second component. Infusion of career development concepts into the regular curriculum in each grade is a recommended goal of any ongoing career education program (Quarles, 1981). Thus, a course was offered to teachers and other classroom and school personnel as the third component. The goals were to teach basic knowledge, understanding, and methods of teaching career education as

an integral part of the school curriculum. Finally, the children who participated in the project were offered a recreation component to complement their career education courses.

The project used the college facilities on Saturdays from 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. in a series of four-week cycles. The class sessions were scheduled in two-hour blocks of time with a short break between classes. The equipment and mannequins in the nursing laboratories were available for the unit on health careers. The gymnasium was used for all the recreational activities. The theater and radio station were used for the units on media and communications. The books, filmstrips, career games, computer-assisted guidance system, and related career materials from the Career Resource Center were used by children, parents, and teachers. The Media Center was used to show films to all participants. The library was available for research and recreational reading.

Childrens' Program

The activities of the childrens' component of CEY included:

- Examination of myths about careers
- Examination of biases against and for careers familiar to the children
- Motivation to explore unfamiliar and nontraditional careers
- Generation of career-related options in cluster areas of interest to children
- Provision of direct participation in career experiences
- Introduction of role models
- Relating of careers to the values of the children

The children's workshops were all activity oriented and designed to enhance exploration of the following career clusters: business and office ("The Business of Sports"), marketing and distribution ("Getting the Business"), communications and media ("Things That Go Bleep" and "On Stage"), and public service ("At Your Service" and "Health and Hospitals"). Each of the cycles provided at least one class in each career cluster. The number of children in any one class was limited to 15 to facilitate the experiential nature of the program. Extra sections were added to accommodate high interest in a particular cluster.

The recreation program, coordinated by the Kingsborough Community College Physical Education Department, allowed youngsters to

select supervised instruction from the offerings in tennis, floor hockey, swimming, basketball, aerobic dance, tumbling, organized games, and creative crafts. The recreation aspect of the program was extremely important in motivating youngsters to commit their Saturdays to an educational experience. There was a good balance of skill building and play in all of the recreation areas. Those children interested in sports, for example, were able to register for a career course titled "The Business of Sports," participate in skills training, and play tennis. Others could register for "Things That Go Bleep," a unit about careers in the technologies and media, as well as swimming instruction.

Children were recruited from their own classrooms with printed literature and brochures describing the project. Before each cycle of classes, children attended a registration conference at the college, where they were able to select the career cluster and recreation component related to their area of interest.

A total of 461 children registered for the career courses and recreation component; they represented the ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity of the district. The majority of these children participated in all four cycles.

Most children were in the fifth and sixth grades; 56% of the registrants were girls and 44% were boys. Participants came from 62 different elementary, intermediate, and junior high schools, seven of which were nonpublic.

Instructors were recruited form Kingsborough Community College, from junior high schools and high schools within and outside the district, and from business and industry. People who enjoyed working with children in an informal, nontraditional manner and who knew their particular field or skill well met the major criteria for selection as instructors. The program was coordinated through the director of counseling, and there was one over-all administrator and one director for each of the four components.

Parent's Program

The parents of the children enrolled in the CEY program were registered in a course in career decision making and participated in a variety of workshops on career development. The course, coordinated by the Department of Student Development, was modeled on an existing college course and adapted to the special needs of the parents. Parents

also could choose to attend additional one-session career-related workshops during the same time period.

The course gave parents an opportunity to explore careers in relation to their interests, aptitudes, abilities, values, and life experiences. The methods of instruction included group discussion, lectures, guest speakers, exercises in self-exploration, administration of an interest inventory, a research project, and visits to work sites.

The principal objective for the course was to develop an increased awareness of the process of career decision making and an acquaintance with the facilitation of this process in youngsters. Some of the topics included individual goal setting; self-assessment; the relationship of abilities, interests, and values to career choice, the current and projected job market, and the decision-making process. The workshops, designed with the same objectives, dealt with resume writing, job search and job interview techniques, time management, and occupational information in the career areas of business, health, communications, and computers. A total of 89 parents registered for the course, and 309 parents participated in the workshops. The instructors were recruited primarily from the college's Department of Student Development, with additional consultation provided by people in business and industry and from several academic departments at the college.

School Personnel Program

The third component was a course titled "Education 82: Theories and Techniques of Career Exploration," which enrolled 245 school personnel from District #22. Participants included teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals, teacher aides, school secretaries, and administrators. The activities of this course consisted of:

- Provision of basic knowledge, understanding, and methods of teaching career education.
- Assistance in the integration or infusion of career education into the existing school curriculum.
- Implementation of ideas, goals, and methods of career education in teachers' classrooms or school settings.

Participants were given an additional incentive to take the course when the New York City Board of Education formally approved it as satisfying the requirements for various salary increments and differentials.

Instructors encouraged the review of career exploration materials relevant to the developmental stages experienced by elementary and junior high students. Special field visits to comprehensive work settings such as hospitals and museums and various consultants from business, industry, and academia were used to acquaint the school personnel with career education networks and resources throughout the city. A final group project required all students to design and reproduce a career resource manual and to develop lesson plans for elementary and junior high schools, incorporating career education into the regular curriculum.

Evaluation

An extensive evaluation of this program was undertaken. *The Career Awareness Inventory, Elementary Level* (Fadale, 1975), was used to assess changes in vocational maturity and knowledge of careers. Pretesting and posttesting were conducted with a sample of 323 children in all the classes involved in the project. The mean scores increased from the pretest to the posttest for the majority of the project students, suggesting a general increase in vocational maturity and knowledge of careers. Session and program evaluations were requested of all children, parents, and teachers in the project. The results suggest that both intended and unintended outcomes were achieved.

As part of the overall evaluation of the program, children were asked to agree or disagree with a number of statements about the class activities. Of the 323 children, 90% indicated that they liked going to classes at a college, 85% indicated that one of the things they liked most was using equipment and facilities, 86% indicated that it was fun to work with other children on a project, and 76% indicated that they liked the special guests and consultants.

Several types of activities for the children were particularly successful: (a) activities that enabled children not only to see but also to use equipment, (b) those activities that gave children an opportunity to introduce their own experiences and concerns, and (c) activities that stressed self-expression and cooperation among participants.

Many of the classroom teachers devised activities that required children to be creative and to express their own thoughts and feelings. Thus, one teacher had children produce a sound and slide show, another had them develop a collage, and still another directed them to create a dance depicting the world of work in an urban community. The action

and self-expression involved in producing a dance were viewed as ideal for helping children not only to understand the public service career cluster but also to develop an appreciation of public service workers.

The intended outcome of increasing children's knowledge of career clusters and occupations was achieved for some, although not all, program participants. Some teachers observed that the children developed self-knowledge, the ability to work together cooperatively on projects, and the skill of communicating more effectively. These outcomes seem to be critical to childrens' career success.

The unintended outcome of doing something fun and constructive with other children was important both to the parents of the participants and to the children themselves. This outcome demonstrates the need for more publicly supported, organized activities for children in this age group.

Increasing parental awareness of the decision-making process was validated by parents' ratings of each individual session of the course for parents. The relative importance of learning in the four areas of goal setting, self-assessment, knowledge of reality factors, and exploration of the current and future job market were assessed through questionnaires in which the parents rated the degree of helpfulness of each session. In general, all of these topics were helpful, with self-assessment and the exploration of reality factors considered slightly more valuable than the others. Asked to describe the most important outcome, one of the instructors cited parents' increased ability to think of themselves as individuals who had the power to change their lives and their greater appreciation of their children's individuality in developing career plans.

Participants in the Career Course for School Personnel responded to a four-page evaluation questionnaire. They indicated confidence about applying their new skills in infusing career education into the curriculum at their schools. Responses to the questionnaire demonstrated that the teachers believed they had gained in a variety of ways: They shared feelings and attitudes about work and career choices; they shared strategies and techniques for lesson development and implementation; they learned about specific resources and materials they could use with their grade levels; and they learned about specific careers and career clusters. Most school personnel valued the field trips as an opportunity to learn about careers and job clusters with which they were unfamiliar. They cited as most valuable those field-trips organized to allow them "behind the scenes" to see not just the public side but also the hidden side of an industry such as the printing business.

As a spinoff of this project, a Career Resource Center has been established at Kingsborough Community College. It is available to all school personnel, both on and off campus, and includes career exploration material such as film strips, career kits, audio and video cassettes, a mini-computer with disks on career exploration, books, and pamphlets. The Career Resource Manual and the booklet of sample lesson plans, cooperatively produced by the District #22 Staff, was distributed throughout the district. The Education 82 course developed under the grant has been incorporated into the education course offerings available at the college.

Considering the previous lack of a systematic career guidance system for the children, parents, and teachers in the middle and junior high schools in Community District #22, the results of this program are encouraging, Children not only found the experience fun and constructive, but they significantly increased their career awareness and knowledge. Self-understanding and communication skills were also enhanced. Those career activities that were considered experiential were valued highly by the children. Self-knowledge and an increased awareness of the career decision-making process were the most valuable outcomes of the course for parents. The school personnel, in assessing the helpfulness of the CEY project, cited increased confidence in their ability to incorporate career education into their curricula.

The best tributes to the success of this project are continuing inquiries from interested parents and teachers about the availability of the program for the 1982-84 academic years. The response to CEY by the community was overwhelmingly enthusiastic, indicating that this comprehensive approach to career education fills a genuine need. It is hoped that other colleges and community school districts will use this project as a model and view it as an example of a community college truly serving the needs of its "community."

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Teaching Job Search Skills to Eighth-Grade Students: A Preview of the World of Work

Shelda Bachin Sandler

To what extent can eighth graders profit from a unit of job search skills as taught by the school counselor in scheduled developmental guidance classes? Or, to restate the question, how much learning actually takes place in the classroom when that learning directly affects an individual's future in the world of work? This is the premise with which I began this mini-study.

As the school counselor, I meet with each middle school class (Grades 6–8) for one period per week for developmental guidance. The topics, according to the curriculum guide, include units such as study skills, interpersonal relationships, drugs, communication skills, and careers, to name just a few.

This study was conducted with 52 eighth-grade boys and girls. Many of the students in this district enter the world of work immediately after graduation from high school; some, like so many of their counterparts of the '80s, maintain a part-time job while still attending high school. In addition, several of the eighth graders shared with me their desire to work during the summer vacation.

With this in mind, it seemed to me that job search skills would rank high in interest level. The method I used to teach was a combination of lecture, discussion, question and answer, audio-visual aids (overhead projection, videotape, and chalkboard), and handouts. The object was to vary the teaching method enough to maintain interest while teaching the basic elements of the job search. Many of these students had previously indicated that they were currently searching for summer or part-time jobs.

Lesson 1. This was basically a motivating lesson. It consisted of a pretest (see Appendix A), an overview of the unit, and a multiple-choice game based on job titles from the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (U.S. Department of Labor, 1977). Interest, as expected, was greatest

during the game. The game was included as the motivator to introduce the unit.

Lesson 2. This consisted of an explanation and examples of resumes. Students were shown two resume styles, and discussion followed about what information is necessary to put on a resume and what information is not. A resume-writing workshop was not scheduled because eighth graders typically have few functional skills or work-related experiences. Therefore, this lesson included only a discussion about resumes. Samples of various resume styles were shown using overhead projection or handouts.

Lesson 3. This involved a discussion of the importance and uses of cover letters and follow-up, or thank-you, letters. The students were shown what information is included in these types of correspondence, again, by use of lecture, overhead projection, and handouts.

Lesson 4. This session focused on the most effective way to fill out a job application. Each of the students was given a blank job application, and after a detailed explanation of the do's and don'ts of answering the questions, they were given class time to complete the application under the direction of the counselor.

Lessons 5 and 6. This was the beginning of a segment about interviewing behaviors, both positive and negative. The counselor explained that positive behaviors are those that lead to a job offer and negative behaviors are those that have a tendency to eliminate ("deselect") the applicant. The students and counselor also discussed what the interviewer looks for during the interview and typical interview questions and answers were role-played. At the conclusion of Lesson 6, a volunteer from the class was chosen to be interviewed on videotape during a "mock" job interview. The students selected a "job" from a list of jobs similar to those that might be found in the classified section in the newspaper. This particular list of jobs, however, was written by the counselor and aimed at the skills and availability of an eighth-grade student. A day and time were determined for the interview; and with the counselor role-playing the part of the interviewer, each student volunteer was interviewed and videotaped in a one-on-one setting.

Lesson 7. This took place immediately after the videotaped interview. During this class period, the videotape was shown to the class and the "applicant" was critiqued, first for strengths that might lead to a job offer and then for areas that might be improved. At no time were judgmental terms such as "good" or "bad" used. In addition, the student volunteers were given a great deal of positive reinforcement from the

counselor for taking the risk of being interviewed and then having the interview critiqued by their peers. In addition to verbalizing the critique, the student observers were required to put their observations into writing using the *Interview Observation Checklist* (see Appendix B). These checklists were then given to the student "applicant" at the end of the class period.

Lesson 8. The final lesson was devoted to any unfinished business, unanswered questions, how to read abbreviations in classified ads ("want" ads), use of references, and a short explanation of networking and employment agencies. The culminating activity involved the posttest (see Appendix A) and a brief evaluation of the unit (see Appendix C).

Conclusion

Based on the sample of 52 students, as represented by two schools in the same school district, it seems evident that eighth-grade students can, indeed, benefit from a unit that teaches job search skills. As indicated by results of the posttest, the average score was increased by 24.7 points. Only three students scored lower on the posttest than they did on the pretest. The mean rose from 26.3 (pretest) to 50.0 (posttest), and the median went from 30.0 to 50.0. The mode jumped 25 points, from 30.0 (pretest) to 55.0 (posttest). The scores on the pretest ranged from 0-55; however, the scores on the posttest ranged from 10-85. the standard deviation was 11.19 (pretest), 14.4 (posttest), and the coefficient of correlation was 0.37.

As I expected from my personal experience as a teacher and a counselor, the favorite part of this unit was the mock videotaped interview. In addition, the students have indicated that they believe the typical interview questions and answers will be the most helpful to them when they actually begin their job search. Almost half of the students responded that they plan to use all of the techniques presented during their own search, and about 40% indicated that they would emphasize all of these techniques if they were helping a friend during his or her job search (see Appendix C).

According to the survey, the least enjoyable part of the unit was resume writing, perhaps because these students are too young to have work-related information to include in a resume; therefore, they could not participate in a resume-writing workshop, an activity that certainly would have added more interest to the lesson.

In conclusion, it is evident that learning did take place over the eight-week period. Furthermore, it would be interesting to follow these same students throughout their high school and college years to monitor their success, whether it be for a full-time permanent job after graduation or for a part-time job while they are still in school.

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Appendix A

Pretest and Posttest

1. A brief outline of a person's educational history and work experience is a(n) _____.
2. Another name for a Letter of Application is a(n) _____ _____.
3. After a job interview, an individual should send a(n) _____ _____ to the interviewer.
4. On a job application, how should a person answer questions that do not apply to him or her? _____
5. At what time should an applicant arrive for a job interview, assuming he or she has a 10:30 appointment?_____
6. If an interviewer asks about your strengths, how many will you list? _____
7. If an interviewer asks about weaknesses, how many will you list and how will you present your weaknesses?
   _____

8. How many blank spaces (unanswered questions is it permissible to have on a job application? _____
9. Name three articles of clothing a person should never wear to a job interview.

_____

10. _____
11. _____
12. The interviewer offers you a doughnut at the beginning of your job interview. What do you do?

_____

13. At what point during the job search do you inquire about salary?

_____

14. Name two resume styles.

_____

15. _____
16. In what kind of order does a resume list work experience and educational history? _____
17. What information is never included in a resume?

_____

18. What color(s) of paper is(are) acceptable for a resume?

_____

19. What does a person do first when meeting the job interviewer?

_____

20. What percentage of available jobs appear in the Classified Ads section of the newspaper? _____

Appendix B
Interview Observation Checklist

Please Rank Each Question From 1-4:

1. not at all
2. rarely
3. sometimes
4. frequently

Did the interviewee:

1. Introduce himself or herself to the interviewer?
2. Shake hands with the interviewer at the beginning and at the end of the interview?

3. Maintain a relaxed posture?
4. Speak clearly?
5. Look directly at the interviewer?
6. Show confidence in himself or herself?
7. Show enthusiasm?
8. Answer the questions directly?
9. Express himself or herself clearly?
10. Ask appropriate job-related questions?

(For additional comments, use reverse side of paper if necessary.)

Appendix C

Job Search Evaluation

1. Which part of the job search unit do you think will be most helpful to you in finding a job? Circle one.

   Resumes
   Cover letters
   Applications
   Follow-up letters
   Interview behaviors and questions
   Videotaped interview
   Other (be specific) _____

2. On the whole, how useful will this unit be to you in finding a job? Circle one.

   Very useful
   Somewhat useful
   Not useful at all

3. Which part of this unit did you enjoy the most? Circle one.

   Resumes
   Cover letters
   Applications
   Follow-up letters
   Interview behaviors and questions
   Videotaped interview
   Other (be specific) _____

4. Which part of the unit did you like the least? Circle one.

   Resumes
   Cover letters
   Applications
   Follow-up letters
   Interview behaviors and questions
   Videotaped interview
   Other (be specific) _____

5. If you were to help your best friend in his or her job search, which part of the unit would you emphasize? Circle one.

   Resumes
   Cover letters
   Applications
   Follow-up letters
   Interview behaviors and questions
   Videotaped interview
   Other (be specific) _____
   All of the above
   None of the above

6. What part of the unit are you most likely to use in your own job search? Circle one.

   Resumes
   Cover letters
   Applications
   Follow-up letters
   Interview behaviors and questions
   Videotaped interview
   Other (be specific) _____

Career Education for Students with Disabilities

Donn E. Brolin
Norman C. Gysbers

In our previous article on the subject (Brolin & Gysbers, 1979) ten years ago, we described as marginal the assimilation of most students with disabilities into the mainstream of society. Although experts believed that most students with disabilities had the potential to become productive and independent citizens, the results from educational and rehabilitation efforts were basically ineffective in preparing many of them for life after school. Societal ignorance and stereotypes about students with disabilities were also identified as serious deterrents to their successful career development and employment. What has happened in the past ten years? What is the status of former students with disabilities? Is it any better than what was achieved in the 1970s, when many promises and mandates were promulgated by federal and state agencies?

In this article we review some of the major developments in the past ten years involved with improving the preparation of students with disabilities for life after school. We will also describe the Life-Centered Career Education (LCCE) approach for these students, identify some programs that are using the LCCE Curriculum to better help students become more productive and functional, and then present a challenge to counselors concerning how they can, using a systematic guidance approach, help students to become more competent individuals. We conclude the article with what we consider to be the unfinished agenda—an agenda that needs to be addressed in the future if we are to truly meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Developments in the 1980s

Several developments occurred in the 1980s to reflect a continuing concern for the welfare of students with disabilities. One example of a development is semantics. Today, terminology describing students with

disabilities has changed from the handicapped, mentally retarded, or handicapped people, to a more humanistic and less dehumanizing term reflecting that they are students first and that they have a disability second. Thus, the term handicap, which we used in our article's title in 1979, has been changed to disabilities.

In addition, as career education terminology subsided in the 1980s, a new term that closely resembled the career education concept was introduced. The term was introduced by Madeleine Will, Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). It was called "transition," which she defined as "...an outcome-oriented process encompassing a broad array of services and experiences that lead to employment" (Will, 1984, p. 2). The transition period included high school, graduation, postsecondary education or adult services, and the initial years of employment. The transition concept, like career education, requires interdisciplinary cooperation in the schools and with community service agencies and employers, as well as meaningful parent involvement. As pointed out by Chadsey-Rusch, Rusch, and Phelps (1989), collaboration is essential to a successful transition-oriented program so students receive planned, appropriate, and nonduplicated services.

Need for Transitional Services

It is apparent from the literature that the transition of students with disabilities from school to work is not better today than it was in previous decades. Studies of former students with disabilities (Hasazi, Gordon, & Roe, 1985; Mithaug, Horiuchi, & Fanning, 1985; Edgar, 1985) clearly reveal that the majority of them have extreme difficulties finding and securing adequate employment and becoming independent. Furthermore, a Louis Harris and Associates (1986) telephone survey with a cross section of 1,000 people with disabilities age 16 and over found two-thirds not working, and most of those who did work were working only part-time. The evidence is clear that the vast majority of students with disabilities never attain a satisfactory level of career development consistent with their capabilities. This unfortunate outcome occurs despite the frequent proclamation that one of the most fundamental tenets of education is to develop to the maximum degree possible the abilities of all its students, so they can become employed, develop personal and social skills, and function as independent citizens.

Legislation

During the 1980s, federal and state legislation was passed to promote and enhance the career development of students with disabilities. Section 626 of the *1983 Amendments to the Education of the Handicapped Act of 1975* addresses the educational and employment transition difficulties of these students. This legislation authorized $6.6 million in grants and contracts to be spent annually by OSERS to improve and strengthen education, training, and related services. During 1984-1988, 180 model demonstration projects were developed and implemented in a wide variety of educational settings to facilitate the transition of youth and adults with disabilities into the work force (Dowling & Hartwell, 1988).

Another important legislative effort was the *Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984*, which provides funds to implement many career development services for students with vocational education opportunities provided to students and parents no later than ninth grade, guidance and counseling services by trained counselors, assessment of abilities, interests, and needs, and inclusion of vocational services as a component of the student's IEP. The Act is designed to provide support to students, including those with disabilities, in vocational programs to enhance their independent functioning.

Other legislation passed in the 1980s to further enhance the career development of persons with disabilities included the *Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986*, *Job Training Partnership Act of 1982*, and the *Developmental Disabilities Act Amendments of 1984*. Each of these Acts requires interagency cooperation and a greater emphasis on providing these individuals with vocational training, employment, and independent living services. Supported employment was introduced in rehabilitation and developmental disabilities legislation as both a service and an employment outcome for people with severe disabilities who required ongoing support in order to maintain competitive employment. Thus students who previously had no options other than sheltered employment or day-activities programs now have a variety of employment possibilities, which can be further enhanced through career education.

Federal and State Agency Efforts

The transition movement has brought together a variety of educational and state agencies to interface with advocate groups, parents, and

students with disabilities so that better ways to coordinate and plan services can be devised. One example is the efforts of the Special Education Regional Resource Centers who sponsored, with the Rehabilitation Services Administration, a series of major conferences bringing together representatives from all possible professional agencies, schools, and advocate groups to work and plan services (Brolin & Schatzman, 1989). Interagency agreements to increase transition and coordination were developed between state rehabilitation agencies, developmental disabilities, and schools, so more substantial efforts could be provided for the students. In many respects these efforts were a rekindling of much of what had occurred in the 1970s but was never adequately carried through (Szymanski, King, Parker, & Jenkins, 1989).

Professional Organizations

The major professional educational groups that continue to promote the career development of students with disabilities are the Division on Career Development (DCD) of The Council for Exceptional Children, the Special Needs Division of the American Vocational Association, and The National Association of Vocational Education Special Needs Personnel (NAVESNP), which is affiliated with the American Vocational Association and the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) of the American Association for Counseling and Development. These groups conduct state, regional, and national conferences on career development, publish journals and other important documents, lobby for and promote important career development legislation, promote research activities, and offer inservice and preservice opportunities. Recently, the Division on Career Development prepared a position paper on special education's responsibility to adults with disabilities, which has become a policy statement for the entire organization of The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

A Functional Skills Approach

Many leaders concerned about the education of students recognize the importance of and the need for career development programs and services. Unfortunately, these programs and services are still not major priorities in most schools. If employment and living successfully in the

community are major educational goals for students with disabilities, we must offer a curriculum that will lead to these accomplishments (Kokaska & Brolin, 1985). Otherwise, as Edgar (1987) has found, more than 30% will continue to drop out of secondary programs and only 15% will secure jobs with a salary above the minimum wage. We endorse Edgar and others who believe a major change in secondary programs for students with disabilities is urgently needed and that there be, once and for all, a shift in focus of secondary curriculum to a more functional approach that will give these students the competencies they need to survive in today's society.

The *Life-Centered Career Education Curriculum* (Brolin, 1978, 1983, 1989) is a career development functional approach that has been implemented in many school districts across the country. The *LCCE Curriculum*, available since 1978, focuses on 22 major competencies that students need to succeed in daily living, personal-social, and occupational areas after they leave school (Table 1). The 22 *LCCE* competencies further subdivide into 97 (previously 102) subcompetencies that relate to one or more of four important career roles that constitute a total worker. These four career roles consist of the work of an employee, the work that is done in the home, volunteer work, and productive avocational activities. *LCCE* is designed to facilitate the student's individual growth and development for all the major roles, settings, and events that constitute a person's total life career development. It is a K through grade 12+ approach built on the four stages of career awareness, exploration, preparation, and assimilation and requires a close and meaningful partnership between educators, the family, and community agencies, employers, and other resources. Hoyt and Shylo (1987) reported *LCCE* to be an effective curriculum that combines important daily living skills instruction with an employability skills focus.

Currently, the senior author and his associates are conducting a U.S. Department of Education-sponsored *LCCE/Employability Enhancement Project* in cooperation with the University of Arkansas Research and Training Center in Vocational Rehabilitation. The project involves comprehensive implementation procedures and validation of newly developed career assessment and instructional materials in several school districts throughout the country. The project is designed to demonstrate that students provided with the *LCCE* approach will gain much greater career and life skills competence and have a significantly better post-school adjustment than those who receive more conventional academic education.

Table 1
Life-Centered Career Education (LCCE) Curriculum

Curriculum Areas	Competency
Daily living skills	1. Managing personal finances
	2. Selecting & managing a household
	3. Caring for personal needs
	4. Raising children & meeting marriage responsibilities
	5. Buying, preparing, & consuming food
	6. Buying & caring for clothing
	7. Exhibiting responsible citizenship
	8. Utilizing recreational facilities and engaging in leisure
	9. Getting around the community
Personal-social skills	10. Achieving self-awareness
	11. Acquiring self-confidence
	12. Achieving socially responsible behavior
	13. Maintaining good interpersonal skills
	14. Achieving independence
	15. Making adequate decisions
	16. Communicating with others
Occupational guidance & preparation	17. Knowing & exploring occupational possibilities
	18. Selecting & planning occupational choices
	19. Exhibiting appropriate work habits & behavior
	20. Seeking, securing, & maintaining employment
	21. Exhibiting sufficient physical-manual skills
	22. Obtaining a specific occupational skill

Some Sample Programs

The *Life-Centered Career Education Curriculum* has been widely adopted in many school districts across the United States and foreign countries since its first publication by The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) in 1978. The third edition of the curriculum guide was published by CEC in 1989, along with several companion products, that is, a *Trainer/Implementation Manual*, two *Activity Books*, and an *LCCE*

Inventory to assess student competency levels. Some examples of the school districts that exemplify comprehensive adoption of the *LCCE Curriculum* are:

1. Marshall (Missouri) Public Schools (Kim Ratcliffe, Director of Special Services) have used *LCCE* to become the framework for their major goal of preparing their students for life. The *LCCE* competencies are infused into the K through 12 curriculum and include community awareness, increased parent participation, advisory committees, and a staff inservice. As classroom lessons are developed around actual work needs, academic, occupational, and personal-social competencies take on a new meaning and give students a humanistic concept of work involving home, community, and school relationships.

2. Moberly (Missouri) Public Schools (George Wilson, Director of Special Education) have used *LCCE* subcompetencies to translate into locally-stated goals and objectives, meet them with specified activities, materials, resources, and evaluation techniques. Their work is stored in the computer and disseminated to each special education teacher in looseleaf binders so that the material can be kept current.

3. District #742 Community Schools in St. Cloud (Minnesota) (Thomas Prescott, Coordinator of Secondary Special Education) have combined locally defined basic skills and *LCCE* competencies to develop specific courses that include the *LCCE Curriculum*. *LCCE* is used to provide a structure for writing clear program goals and knowing how each of the classes, activities, services, and roles contribute toward those goals. IEP goals focus on *LCCE* competencies, which has led to a great networking benefit between schools using the *LCCE* program.

Space prohibits describing other programs, although such school districts as Minneapolis, St. Paul, Brainerd (Minnesota), Jackson (Michigan), Shawano (Wisconsin), Aurora (Colorado), Richmond (California), Joplin (Missouri), Bolivar (Missouri), and Osceola (Arizona) are other good examples.

The Challenge for School Counselors

The challenge for school counselors to respond to the career development needs of students with disabilities is as great today as it was in 1979—perhaps even greater! Today, however, because of changes in how guidance is being conceptualized and practiced in the schools, the opportunity for school counselors to meet this challenge has increased

substantially. Why? Because guidance in the schools is increasingly being conceptualized and practiced as a comprehensive competency-based program.

Gysbers and Henderson (1988) described one model of a comprehensive program as having four program components. These components are guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. The model is competency-based (student competencies) with identified percentages of counselor time devoted to carrying out guidance activities in each component.

This model, and others like it that have similar components, is ready-made to incorporate selected competencies from the *LCCE* list of 22 competencies. Competencies 10 through 15, and 17, 18, and 20, for example, are particularly appropriate for inclusion in the guidance curriculum. Since most programs that have a curriculum component already have competencies identified, it is recommended that they be reviewed in light of the *LCCE* competencies. Are there gaps? What modifications may be required to serve students with disabilities?

Once this process is complete, the next step is to review the sequence of the competencies—which ones are to be accomplished by which grade level or grade level grouping. If a sequence had not been established already in the program, the sequence of awareness, exploration, and preparation might be considered.

Career Awareness

This phase is particularly important during the elementary years, although it continues throughout the life span. During this phase, guidance activities, delivered through the guidance curriculum, focus on helping students with disabilities begin to learn about their feelings, values, and potential. The focus also is on helping these students develop feelings of self-worth and confidence, to become aware of socially desirable behaviors, and to become aware of the need to develop communication skills to relate to others.

In the case of the occupational competencies, the focus is on developing positive attitudes about work, to begin to see themselves as potential workers, and to become aware of different kinds of jobs and job responsibilities. In addition, the focus is on the development of a work personality and to become aware of the kinds of work habits and behaviors required to be successful.

Counselors can help teachers to identify the emerging interests and needs of their students and the special aptitude and abilities that each seem to possess. A variety of career awareness activities, involving parents and community resource people, should include speakers, media, field trips, home assignments, career games, role playing, puppetry, cooperative learning, and simulated business activities. Motivating and realistic learning experiences can increase academic learning as well as promote career development.

Career Exploration

Exploration is emphasized during the middle school-junior high school years. Here guidance activities assist students with disabilities to carefully explore their abilities and needs, the requirements of the labor market, and unpaid work roles and avocational/leisure activities through tryout experiences. In the personal-social area of the *LCCE*, for example, guidance activities focus on exploring abilities, needs, and interests. In the occupational area, guidance activities emphasize exploration of occupational clusters through hands-on experiences, both in and out of school. Work samples, simulated job tasks, and community jobs can be used in the development of work habits and behaviors required for future employment. In addition, such activities provide students with necessary experiential referents to enable participation in career decision making. Career and vocational assessment are important to conduct with each experience so that students can examine interests and aptitudes. Also important to emphasize at this stage is exploring the unpaid work roles of homemaker, family member, volunteer, and a person who engages in productive avocational/leisure activities.

Preparation

Although preparation begins in early childhood and continues throughout life, special attention is required during the latter part of middle school-junior high school and during high school. Guidance activities through the curriculum component as well as other components of the program emphasize the development and clarification of personal-social and occupational competencies. Specific interests, aptitudes, and skills are further clarified and life-styles more clearly delineated. In the

occupational area, career choices, although still tentative, are more specially related to vocational and academic instruction. Students with disabilities will need additional help during this phase to select from the variety of courses and experiences available. Preparation for most students with disabilities requires a substantial experiential component. Comprehensive vocational evaluation (vocational tests, work/job samples, situation assessment, job tryouts) also is important in examining the realism of their choices and their education and training needs. Many students with disabilities may require more than the traditional amount of time to prepare for an occupation and for work in the other three work-role areas. Finally, most students with disabilities have life-long learning needs. These needs should be taken into account with placement, follow-up, and other supportive guidance activities.

Counselor Competencies

To carry out guidance activities during the various phases of the guidance curriculum requires counselors who can accomplish the following activities:

1. conduct or arrange for career assessment for students with disabilities
2. develop and use community resources, particularly for referral purposes
3. become an advocate for students with disabilities
4. contribute to the development and monitoring of individual learning programs in cooperation with other educators and parents
5. consult with parents concerning the career development of their children
6. consult with other educators concerning the development of self-awareness and decision making competencies in students with disabilities
7. work with students with disabilities in the selection of training opportunities and the selection of job possibilities
8. counsel students with disabilities

Comprehensive guidance program models, such as the one described by Gysbers and Henderson (1988), offer a structure to organize, implement, and manage the schools' guidance activities and services. Through this model's guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive

services, and system support program components, school counselors can work directly and effectively with all students including those with disabilities. In addition, they can work directly and effectively with teachers, parents, administrators, and members of the community to accomplish the goals of the program.

The Unfinished Agenda: Challenge for the 1990s

Over the past 20 years, the need to provide better educational and rehabilitation services to students with disabilities has been widely recognized throughout this country. Legislation has been passed resulting in money to develop programs, conduct research, hire additional personnel, and offer more services in schools and adult service agencies. But it appears from our experience and the data presented in the literature that students with disabilities are not attaining greater vocational and independent living success than they did in previous years.

The agenda is unfinished. What do we need to do to finish the agenda? In our opinion, some of the major challenges that need attention to better meet the needs of students with disabilities are the following:

One challenge is the double-edged sword that exists in our educational programs. On the one hand, educators promote the concept of career and life skills training for these individuals and, on the other hand, they increase academic requirements and proficiency tests for graduation. Thus, academic training becomes the predominant thrust in the education of all students. The result, as McBride and Forgone (1985) found, is less time available for career and vocational education (only 7 of 593 short-term instructional objectives for 90 Florida junior high school students with disabilities were career and vocational).

Another challenge is for professionals to break out of their traditional disciplines and approaches. Why do many professionals continue to have stereotypes and negative attitudes toward these individuals? Students with disabilities are not a monolithic group! They vary considerably in ability levels, and most can benefit from regular class placement like everyone else. Some have special needs that require modification or individual attention. Professionals need to view these students in this perspective rather than in a stereotypic and limiting manner. An accepting learning environment must be provided so these students can also benefit from our educational system.

Too many schools depend on other agencies to provide for the career development needs of students with disabilities. But in reality most do not have the time, staff, or money to provide quality services. Perhaps school-based rehabilitation counselors, as suggested by Szymanski et al. (1989), are one solution to providing some of the students with a specialized transition service if they need it.

Schools must become more flexible and willing to change their programs to meet the real needs of their students. Although schools may also cite money, time, resources, and personnel shortages as barriers to change, the real culprit is the unwillingness of many educators to change. This includes institutions of higher education and their administration and teacher and counselor education programs. As Knowlton and Clark (1987) indicated, until educators come to grips with how to effect systemwide change, the struggle will go on as before.

Are we really going to finish the agenda and give all students, including those with disabilities, the opportunity to become competent and productive adults after they leave school? If so, we strongly must break away from traditional practices so that comprehensive career education and guidance programs are truly implanted in our nation's schools. As stated in our previous article, we must think with both our hearts and our heads and provide an atmosphere that will help all individuals learn more about themselves and prepare them for the many options that await them if we do the job right.

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